

Remarks

Applicants have carefully reviewed the application in light of the December 22, 2004 Office Action. To further the prosecution of the application, Applicants have amended various portions of the specification to address the Examiner's objections thereto and have amended claim 22 and, by implication, claim 23, which depends from claim 22, to address the Examiner's rejection thereto. For the reasons expressed below, Applicants submit that the application is in condition for allowance and respectfully request same.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner indicates that claims 8-21 and 24-25 are allowable. Detailed Action ¶ 6. Applicants thank the Examiner for this finding.

Objection to the Abstract

The Examiner objects to the Abstract, indicating that it should be limited to one paragraph. Detailed Action ¶ 2. Applicants have submitted a new Abstract that is composed of one paragraph. A clean version of the new Abstract is provided in Attachment A. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the objection to the Abstract.

Objection to the Detailed Description

The Examiner objects to the Detailed Description at page 1, line 19, indicating that "numeral 103" should be "numeral 104." Detailed Action ¶ 3. Applicants have amended the Detailed Description at page 1, line 19, to change "numeral 103" to "numeral 104." Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the objection to the Detailed Description.

§ 112, ¶ 2 Rejection to Certain Claims

The Examiner rejects claims 22-23 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, ¶ 2, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter regarded as the invention. Detailed Action ¶ 5. According to the Examiner, the last clause of claim 22 – "while

transmitting the measurement data points for the zone, measuring input response characteristics for a successive zone with the field instrument” – has two potential interpretations: 1) repeating the measuring of input response characteristics for a zone to assure that the response characteristics for the zone are completely transmitted; or 2) measuring the input response characteristics for each zone of the plurality of zones. *Id.* Applicants disagree.

“While transmitting the measurement data points for the zone, measuring input response characteristics for a successive zone with the field instrument” means that while the measurement data points for a zone are transmitted, input response characteristics for a subsequent zone are measured. Corresponding examples of such an operation appear throughout the specification. See, e.g., pg. 4, l. 27 – pg. 5, l. 3; pg. 5, ll. 17-24. Thus, the Examiner’s first interpretation of the clause – which requires a repetition of an operation for a zone, as opposed to applying the operation to another zone – is inappropriate.

However, to further prosecution, Applicants have amended the last clause of claim 22 to remove any possible confusion on the part of the Examiner. The last limitation now recites “while transmitting the measurement data points for the zone, measuring input response characteristics for a second zone with the field instrument.” Thus, while the measurement data points for a zone are transmitted, the input response characteristics for another zone are measured with the field instrument. Applicants submit that this amendment, while possibly marginally clarifying the clause, actually broadens the limitation.

Based on the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the §112, ¶ 2 rejection of claims 22-23.

Applicants note that the Examiner may be reading limitations into claims 22-23. For example, the Examiner indicates that the Examiner’s first interpretation of the last clause of claim 22 corresponds to the limitations of claim 23. Detailed Action ¶ 5. As another example, the Examiner asserts that the second interpretation of the last clause of claim 22 means “measuring input response characteristics for *each zone* of the plurality of zones.” *Id.* (emphasis added). Applicants strenuously object to any such interpretations if the Examiner is in fact

Applicant : Yoji Saito, et al.
Serial No. : 10/665,791
Filed : September 18, 2003
Page : 9 of 11

Attorney's Docket No.: 15825-074001 / MN-02-02

espousing them. Applicants desire and request that the claims be evaluated based on the limitations expressly contained therein.

Applicant : Yoji Saito, et al.
Serial No. : 10/665,791
Filed : September 18, 2003
Page : 10 of 11

Attorney's Docket No.: 15825-074001 / MN-02-02

Conclusion

Based on the foregoing, Applicants submit that a good-faith effort has been made to advance the prosecution of this application. Furthermore, Applicants submit that the application is in condition for allowance and respectfully request same. If the Examiner feels that prosecution may be advanced by a conference, however, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to contact the below-listed attorney.

Applicants do not believe that this paper requires any adjustment in fees. If, however, Applicants are mistaken, please apply any charges or credits to deposit account 06-1050, with reference to the above-identified attorney docket number.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: March 3, 2005

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Attachment A

Below is a clean version of the new Abstract:

Process control systems may include one or more diagnostic systems and/or processes. In particular implementations, a diagnostic system and process for a field instrument may include the ability to divide a signal input range into a plurality of zones with respect to an input axis or a time axis, measure input response characteristics for a zone with the field instrument, and store measurement data points for the zone in memory of the field instrument. The diagnostic system and process may also include the ability to transmit the measurement data points for the zone to a host application and, while transmitting the measurement data points for the zone, measure input response characteristics for a second zone with the field instrument.